

**THE STATE OF MINNESOTA  
FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT-HENNEPIN COUNTY DISTRICT COURT**

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*Media Advisory*

## **Traffic Court comes to Minneapolis Community Neighborhood Centers**

***For immediate release***

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (April 19, 2006)— Individuals with minor traffic violations can now resolve tickets, possibly without needing to travel outside their neighborhood, with “Traffic Court in the Community”, a new initiative of holding court hearings in Minneapolis community neighborhood centers by the Fourth Judicial District.

The Fourth Judicial District Hennepin County Traffic Court calendar has a high number of court appearances related to driver’s license suspension, cancellation, revocation and driving without insurance. Many of the individuals are caught up in a cycle of repeat offenses often times due to a lack of financial resources or knowledge of court services.

“I am excited about bringing traffic court into more Minneapolis neighborhoods because it should make it easier for individuals to solve these problems. Many individuals are in court because of unpaid tickets due to a financial hardship. They get caught up in a cycle and give up. If the minor violations can get resolved, hopefully it helps with the other areas of their life affected by not having a valid license,” Judicial Referee Susan Cochrane said.

An individual fulfilling their obligation to the Criminal Justice System by performing community service is based on the Restorative Justice principle of giving back to the community in lieu of paying court fines and fees. This resolution was first offered to minor traffic violations offenders at Restorative Justice events held in 2004 and 2003. These events led to the permanent incorporation of the Restorative Justice principle with the establishment of the Payable Traffic Court Calendar. Traffic Court in the Community is a further expansion of the Payable Traffic Court Calendar.

“We hope to visit all four corners of the city in the upcoming year. Along with our partners Eastside Neighborhood Services and Sentencing to Service-Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections, the Fourth Judicial District sincerely thanks the Minneapolis City Attorney’s Office for their contributions in making this traffic calendar a success,” Referee Cochrane said.

The first Traffic Court in the Community will be held on Friday, April 21, 2006 at Eastside Neighborhood Services located at 1700 Second Street Northeast in Minneapolis. The calendar begins at 8:30 a.m.

If you would like to contest a ticket, you must first visit the Fourth Judicial District Hearing Office. If the Hearing Officer is unable to settle the case, individuals may have the option of scheduling a court appearance on this day. Please contact the Hearing Office at 612-348-2040 to schedule an appointment.

#### **About the Violations Bureau**

The Violations Bureau (VB) is a division of the Fourth Judicial District Court that handles payable community violations and motor vehicle tickets issued in all cities in Hennepin County. The Violations Bureau in the Hennepin County Government Center provides walk-in and phone services available from 7:30-4:30 p.m. to answer questions, accept payments and set court dates. To contest a ticket, individuals must first visit the Fourth Judicial District Hearing Office. Hearing Offices are located at all Fourth Judicial District locations in Downtown Minneapolis, Brooklyn Center, Minnetonka and Edina. Along with Hearing Offices, all locations also provide ticket payment and information services. To schedule an appointment with any Hearing Office, please call 612-348-2040.

#### **About the Fourth Judicial District**

The State of Minnesota's Fourth Judicial District serves only Hennepin County and is the state's largest trial court. For the nearly 750,000 cases annually received, its mission is to provide a system of Justice that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies

Sixty-one judges, 15 referees and more than 550 staff serve in these courts: Civil, Criminal / Traffic (including Domestic Violence, Drug and the Community Impact and Property Calendars), Juvenile, Probate / Mental Health, Family, Housing and Conciliation. Fourth Judicial District judges and staff strive to offer an accessible, fair, courteous, efficient and innovative system of Justice for its communities.

Fourth Judicial District facilities in downtown Minneapolis are located at the Hennepin County Government Center, Public Safety Facility, Juvenile Justice Center, Family Justice Center and City Hall. The suburban court facilities are located in Brooklyn Center (Brookdale / Division II), Minnetonka (Ridgedale / Division III) and Edina (Southdale / Division IV). For more information, please visit our website at [www.courts.state.mn.us/districts/fourth](http://www.courts.state.mn.us/districts/fourth)

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